

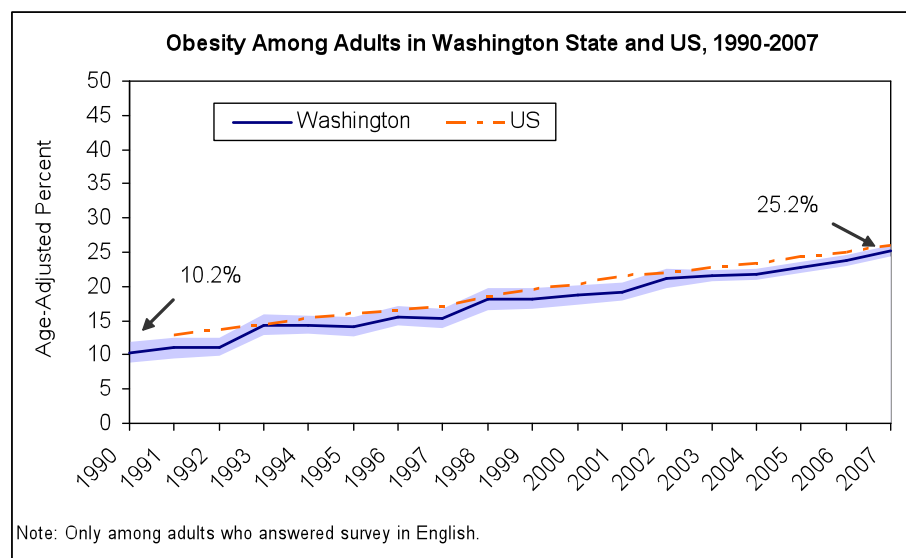
Obesity in Washington State

Obesity contributes to a host of chronic diseases and causes a greater likelihood of premature death.^{1,2,3} In Washington and the nation, obesity is epidemic. The epidemic is driven by changes in the physical, social and economic environment that make it easy to take in more calories than needed while making it harder to get enough physical activity to consume those extra calories. Many barriers make it difficult for people to change their eating and physical activity habits. Prevention is the greatest hope to slow and reverse obesity. To be successful in reducing obesity, government, communities, and individuals need to work together to create environments that support healthy diets and opportunities for physical activity.

Prevalence and Trends⁴

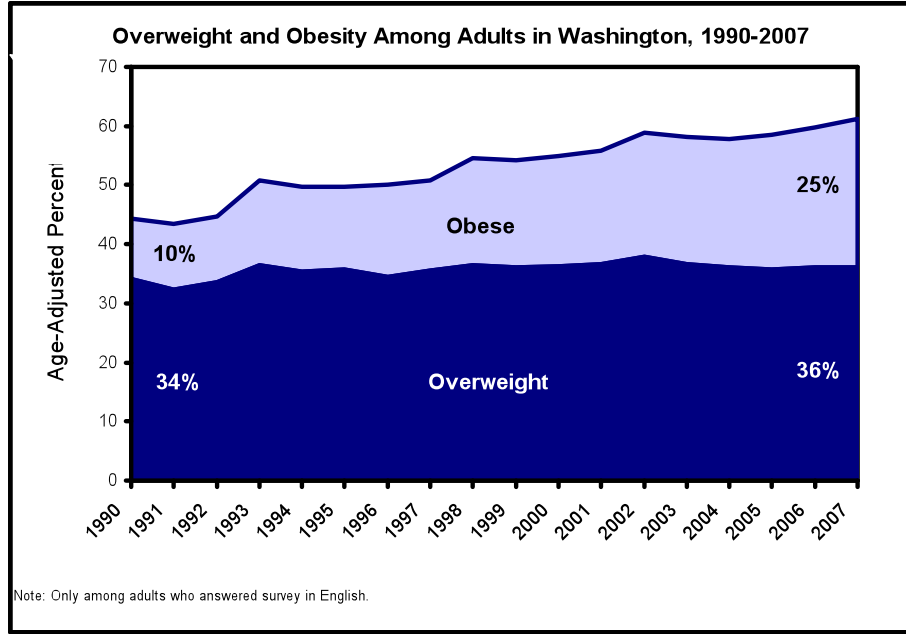
* More and more people in Washington are becoming obese⁵.

* The age-adjusted percent of adults who are obese more than doubled over the past 17 years, increasing from 10% in 1990 to 25% in 2007.



* Nationally, the rate of increase in obesity slowed slightly after 2001 to 3% a year,⁶ but in Washington, obesity rates continued to rise at the same pace (4% a year) from 1993-2007.

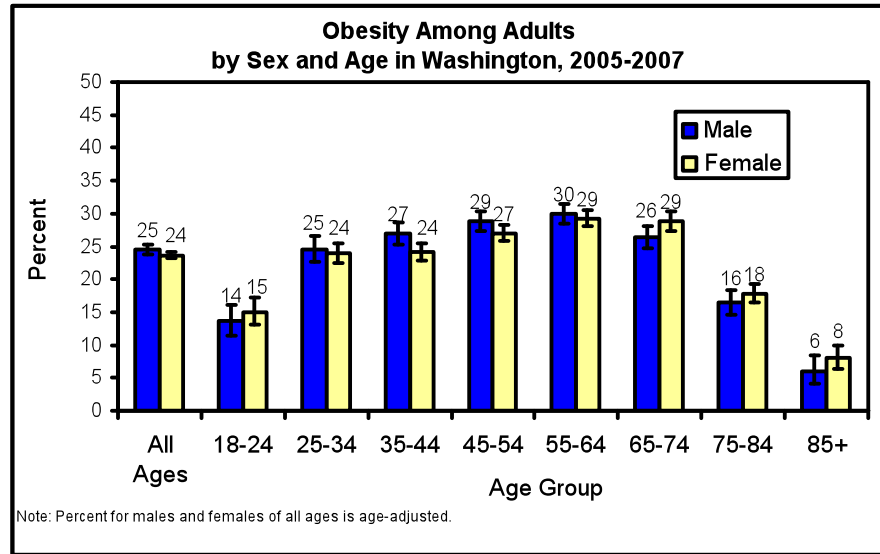
* Unlike obesity, the percent of adults who are overweight has not been increasing but remains steady at 36%.



Age and Gender⁴

* In adults, the prevalence of obesity increases with age until 65 in men and 75 in women, after which it begins a steep decline.

* Obesity has increased at different rates for men and women in various age groups between 1999 and 2007.



* Obesity prevalence has not changed for young men ages 18-25 years, but obesity prevalence among young women of the same age continues to rise.

Age (years)	Men	Women
	Annual % Change	Annual % Change
18-24	0%	7%
25-34	5%	7%
35-44	6%	5%
45-54	3%	3%
55-64	0%	0%
65 or more	4%	4%

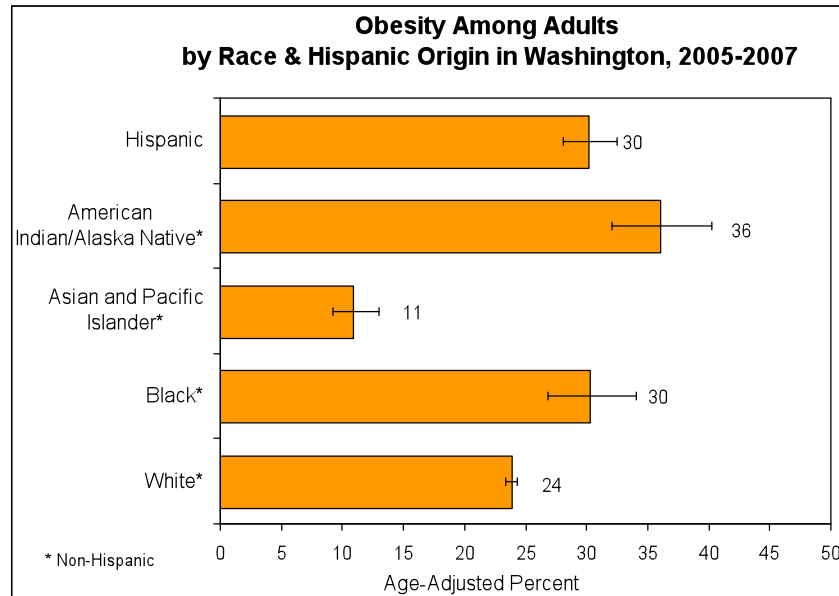
*Note: Among adults who took survey in English.

* Obesity is increasing among middle age men and women (25-34 and 35-44 years). A slower rate of increase is observed for older adults (45-54 and 65 years or more).

* The prevalence of obesity has not changed for men and women ages 55-64 years since 1999.

Race and Hispanic Origin⁴

* American Indians and Alaska Natives have the highest prevalence of obesity, followed by Blacks and adults of Hispanic origin. Asians and Pacific Islanders have the lowest prevalence of obesity followed by whites.



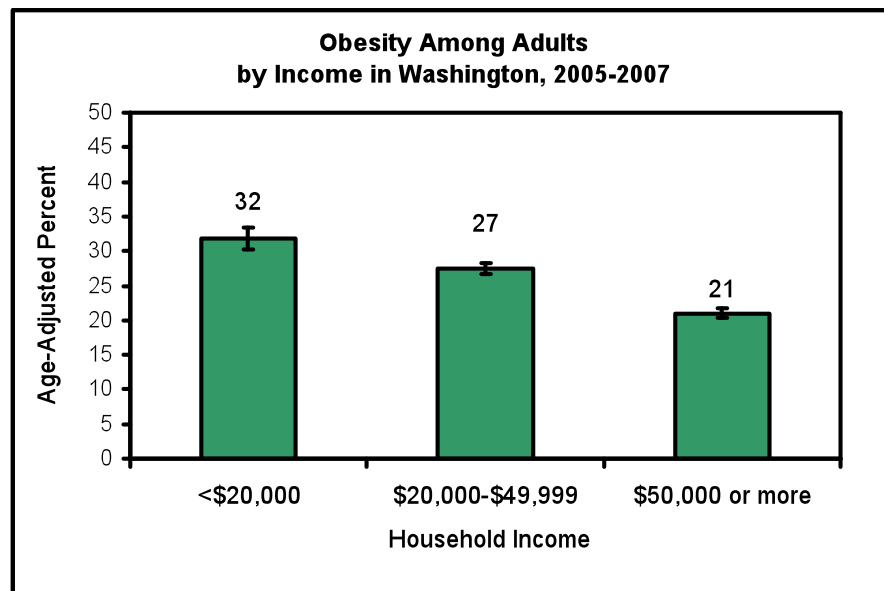
* After controlling for gender, income, education, and age only American Indians and Alaska Natives had significantly higher prevalence than non-Hispanic whites.

* These patterns probably reflect a combination of differences in genetics, cultural factors, access to health care and to social and economic opportunities, and experiences of racial discrimination.⁷

Income and Education⁴

* Higher prevalence of obesity is associated with lower levels of income and education.

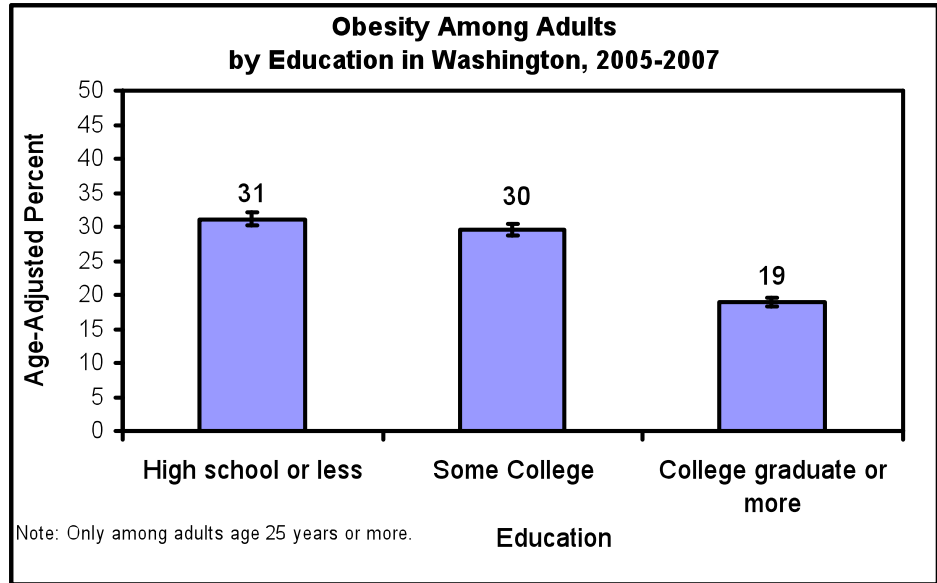
* Adults with annual household incomes of less than \$20,000 are 34% more likely to be obese than those in



households with annual incomes of \$50,000 or more.

* Adults with a high school education or less are 39% more likely to be obese than college graduates.

* These patterns for income and education remain after accounting for each other and for gender, race, and Hispanic origin, along with age.

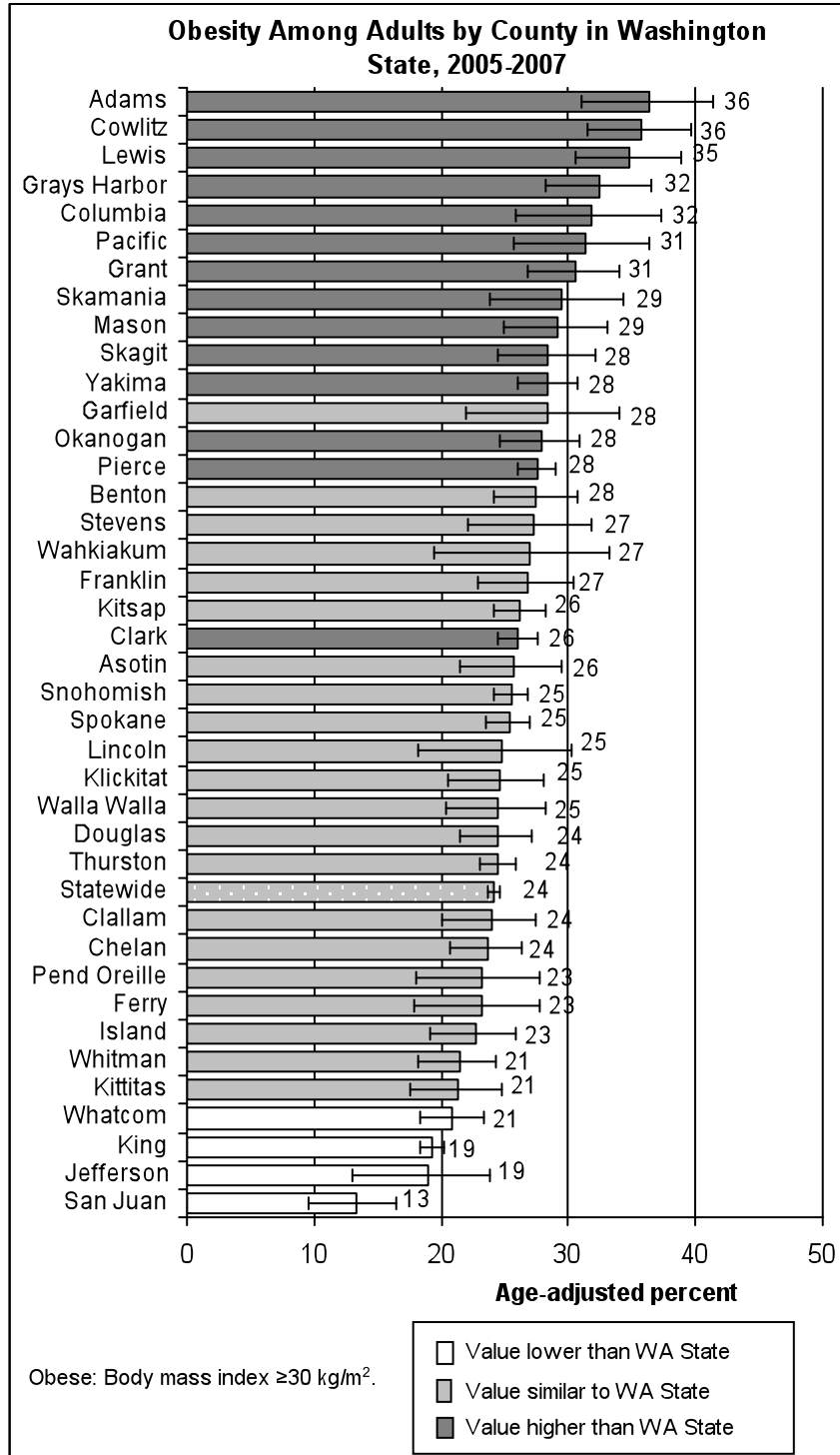


Geographic Variation⁴

* The prevalence of obesity is not distributed evenly throughout Washington.

* Age-adjusted prevalence for obesity ranges from 13% in San Juan County to 36% in Adams County.

* Fourteen counties have a prevalence of obesity higher than the state prevalence: Adams, Cowlitz, Lewis, Grays Harbor, Columbia, Pacific, Grant, Skamania, Mason, Skagit, Yakima, Garfield, Okanogan, Pierce, Benton, Stevens, Wahkiakum, Franklin, Kitsap, Clark, Asotin, Snohomish, Spokane, Lincoln, Klickitat, Walla Walla, Douglas, Thurston, Statewide, Clallam, Chelan, Pend Oreille, Ferry, Island, Whitman, Kittitas, Whatcom, King, Jefferson, and San Juan counties have a prevalence of obesity below the state prevalence.

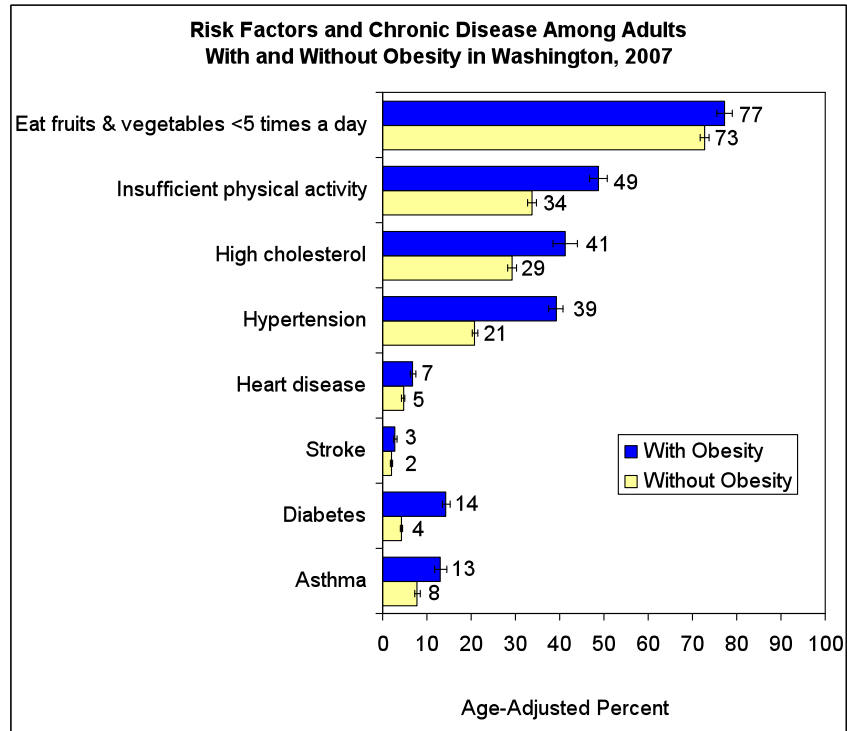


Risk Factors and Chronic Disease⁴

* Adults who are obese are much less likely to have diets that are rich in fruits and vegetables or to be physically active at recommended levels.

* Obese adults are more likely to have cardiovascular risk factors of high blood cholesterol and hypertension, and more likely to have chronic disease like heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and asthma.

* To prevent obesity, we must improve nutrition and boost physical activity.



Overweight Among Youth

* Several factors contribute to the increasing rates of overweight among children such as fewer opportunities for physical activity, fewer meals eaten at home, media and marketing that target children with food advertisements, increased portion sizes, and increased amount of time in sedentary activities, including watching television and using computers.⁸

* Other factors, such as fetal weight gain⁹, parental obesity¹⁰, and the age at which a child's "adiposity rebound" begins¹¹, also contribute to overweight and obesity among children.

* In 2006, 11% of 10th grade students in Washington were overweight and another 14% were at risk for being overweight.^{12,13}

* Additional data on overweight in adolescents is collected as part of Washington State's Healthy Youth Survey and is found here: <http://www.askhys.net/layout.asp?page=intro>. Click on the HYS Fact Sheets Menu to access data.

References

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4. Washington State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey.
5. For adults, overweight and obesity ranges are determined by using weight and height to calculate a number called the “body mass index” (BMI). BMI is used because, for most people, it correlates with their amount of body fat. An adult who has a BMI between 25 and 29.9 kg/m² is considered overweight. An adult who has a BMI of 30 kg/m² or higher is considered obese. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Overweight and Obesity: Defining Overweight and Obesity. Available: <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/obesity/defining.htm>. Accessed January 4, 2008.)
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7. Washington State Department of Health. *The Health of Washington State*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Department of Health, 2007. Available: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/hws>. Accessed January 4, 2008.
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12. Washington State, Healthy Youth Survey.
13. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) generally does not use the term “obesity” for children. Overweight and risk for overweight are based on age and gender specific growth charts developed by the CDC (Kuzmarski, Ogden, Grummer-Strawn, et al., 2000). Body mass index is obtained by dividing a person's weight (in kilograms) by the square of his or her height (in centimeters). Individuals in the top 5 percent for body mass index (based on the growth charts) are considered overweight and those in the top 15 percent, but not the top 5 percent, are considered at risk for overweight.